BITS,BYTES&PIXELS

LIMA 99/4A USERS GROUP

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THE NEW FEATURES OF FUNNELWEB v4.31

described by Charles Good
Lima Ohio User Group

It's here! It's what all 40 column users have been waiting for all their 99/4A lives. Accompanying this issue of BB&P are disks with FUNNELWEB v4.31 going to all user groups on our newsletter exchange list and all paid members of the Lima User Group. Any other INDIVIDUAL or USER GROUP can obtain these files by sending disks (4 SSSD, or 2 DSSD, or 1 DSDD) and a paid return mailer to the Lima User Group at P.O. Box 647, Venedocia OH, 45894. We charge no copy fee.

I know there are many 40 column users who have not bothered to upgrade to more recent versions of Funnelweb because the enhancements added since v4.21 have largely been available only to 80 column users. Now ALL 99/4A users can have access to the full range of features available from Funnelweb, particularly Funnelweb's special utility called DISK REVIEW (DR). Funnelweb's 40 and 80 column DISK REVIEW is so neat that most users will want to configure Funnelweb so that DISK REVIEW pops up immediately upon entry to the Funnelweb environment. The new features of v4.31 make it worthwhile for all Funnelweb users to upgrade from previous Funnelweb versions, and upgrading is easy. Load your previous version's SYSCON file into Funnelweb v4.31's CONFIGURE by pressing S(ysinfo) and then L(oad). Then press BACK and I(nstall) your old SYSCON data into v4.31's LOAD and FW files. You can use your previously configured user lists (files UL and D1) unmodified with the new Funnelweb.

40 and 80 column DR now contains a complete set of disk management functions. Disks can be FORMATted (S,D, or Quad density), VALIDATEd, RENAMEd, and SWEEPt. Whole disks can be automatically copied, file by file, to multiple drives. You can put your master disk in drive 1, press a couple of keys, and copy all the files to DSK2, DSK3, and DSK4 while you go have a cup of coffee. You can copy a file back onto the same disk under a different name. You can also copy file by file using a single drive with prompts for inserting master and copy disks. Single drive copying is a feature not available on the 80 column version of DR. File copy uses a 46 sector buffer and proceeds faster than file copying using DSKU and a little slower than DM1000.

Individual files can be PROTECTed, UNPROTECTed, DELETEd, and (if accidently deleted) RECOVERed. If you have a MYARC ramdisk you can CALL PART and CALL EMDK from within Funnelweb's 40 or 80column DR. If you have a Horizon ramdisk with KOS 8.1 or higher you can DM and AO/AF from within DR. If you have the Australian QUEST ramdisk you can do AON and AOF from within DR.

Funnelweb's 40 column DR also includes a full feature sector editor that does everything the 80 column DR sector editor does except display the sector simultaneously in ASCII and HEX. There just isn't room on a 40 column screen for this type of display. You just move the cursor next to a file name in a disk directory and press I (for Inspect). You are then given the opportunity to examine and edit the sectors of the file or to search for a string (ASCII or Hex string with wild card option) within the file. You can also search a whole disk for a string, or examine and edit sectors by absolute disk sector number. This is a very full featured easy to use sector editor. V4.31 of Funnelweb no longer contains DISK PATCH for sector editing, because DISK REVIEW is so much better.

The new 40 or 80 column DR gives direct access to BOTH of Funnelweb's central menus displayed simultaneously on screen. Just move the cursor next to a central menu entry, press <enter> and boot the indicated program.

You can, of course, do all of the neat stuff already available in the v4.21 40 column DR. You can bring up a disk directory, move the cursor next to the name of a RUNable file, press R, and RUN the program. This can be done for ANY kind of runable program, including XB stuff that lists as IV254. You can view ANY file on the screen by moving the cursor next to the file name and pressing V. The view buffer has been reduced to 8K in order to make room for all the additional features described in the preceding two paragraphs. Unlike the v4.21 40 column DR, when the V(iew) buffer of v4.31 is full viewing stops. You can then either examine what is in the V(iew) buffer or continue to view the rest of the file and overwrite the top of what is already in the V(iew) buffer. You may at any time print part or all of the contents of the V(iew) buffer to a printer or to a disk file.

Besides the greatly enhanced 40 column DR, v4.31 has other new features. It is now possible to bring up Quick Directory (by pressing AID, FCTN/7) and mark a file with the space bar FROM WITHIN the Formatter and Assembler. In the case of the Formatter, the newly marked file does not appear on the formatter screen until you move the cursor one space within the work file name as it is displayed on the formatter menu. This procedure is strange, but it does work and it is certainly better than being totally unable to mark files from within the formatter.

A really nice new feature is the ability to use any alternate character set within the editors. This allows you to use a foreign language character set in place of Funnelweb's C1 and C2 character sets to display foreign

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language characters on screen. To specify a special character set, go to a Funnelweb central menu and press FCTN/9 (BACK). Answer N to the QUIT? prompt, and then you will be given the opportunity to specify the file name of any alternate character set. Such file names must be two characters long and the CHAR files should already be in the appropriate TIW or E/A Funnelweb drive or subdirectory. We have included some public domain foreign language CHAR files with our distribution of v4.31 for use in this way. The little used keystrokes that normally display such things as ;{[}]\'~ display instead foreign characters with these files. These additional CHAR files added by us are NOT part of the official Funnelweb 4.31 package as received by us from Tony McGovern. C3=French. C4=Spanish. C5=German. C6=Italian. C7=Swedish.

Those with 80 column systems (GENEVE, or 99/4A with 80 column device) can now use the 80 column DR to view MYART pictures in up to 256 colors. Just move the cursor next to a picture name in a DR disk directory, press V(iew) and the picture pops up on the screen. The background color of the picture can then be altered to enhance viewing pleasure before finally returning to the DR disk directory. MYART picture viewing, and a simultaneous ASCII/HEX sector display are the only two features of the 80 column DR that are lacking in the new 40 column DR.

This is a major update, particularly the enhanced 40 column DR. If you use the new features of 40 column DR you should send the McGoverns an additional fairware donation (cash, traveler's cheque, or international money order) over and above what you have already paid for other parts of Funnelweb. Tony McGovern writes that he is planning to get an Amiga and start programming for this device. Will McGovern already has one. Some $$ and an accompanying letter of appreciation will help maintain the McGovern's interest in the 99/4A.

Below is a commented directory of the Funnelweb v4.31 files in DSSD format. The comments accompanying each file name have been added by me and should aid Funnelweb users in figuring out what each file does.

Filename	File Type	Size	Comment
-READ-ME	D/V 80	47	Tony McGovern introductory comments
-READFIRST	D/V 80	13	Charles Good's introductory comment
AR	PGM 8066	33	ARCHIVER v3.03
AS	PGM 8192	33	Assembler, part 1
AT	PGM 5354	22	Assembler, part 2
C1	PGM 1024	5	Text editor character set
C2	PGM 1024	5	Programmer's editor character set
C3-C7/ARC	I/F 128	11	Foreign language char sets,archived
C99PFI;0	D/F 80	2	use with c99 programs
CF	PGM 7994	33	CONFIGURE, part 1
CG	PGM 6226	26	CONFIGURE, part 2
CHAKA1	PGM 1024	5	char set for use with DSKU v4.2
CP	PGM 587	4	use with c99 programs
CT8K/U	D/F 80	17	installs Funnelweb on SUPERCART
D1	PGM 542	4	DISK UTILITIES user list
DR	PGM 8192	33	40 column DISK REVIEW, part 1
DR80	PGM 9984	40	80 column DISK REVIEW, part 1
DR81	PGM 7922	32	80 column DISK REVIEW, part 2
DS	PGM 7652	31	40 column DISK REVIEW, part 2
DU	PGM 8192	33	Disk Utilities V 4.2 Part 1 of 3
DV	PGM 8192	33	Disk Utilities V 4.2 Part 2 of 3
DW	PGM 7424	30	Disk Utilities V 4.2 Part 3 of 3
EA	PGM 1860	9	need on disk to boot assembly stuff
ED	PGM 8192	33	40 column editor, part 1
ED80	PGM 8192	33	80 column editor, part 1
ED81	PGM 5080	21	80 column editor, part 2
EE	PGM 4328	18	40 column editor, part 2
FO	PGM 8192	33	FORMATTER, part 1
FP	PGM 3620	16	FORMATTER, part 2
FSAVE	D/F 80	7	creates assembly PROGRAM files
FW	PGM 8152	33	main FUNNELWEB program, boot fromEA
FWDOC/DR40	D/V 80	75	40 column DR doc, part 1
FWDOC/DR41	D/V 80	64	40 column DR doc, part 2
FWDOC/DR80	D/V 80	119	80 column DR doc, part 1
FWDOC/DR81	D/V 80	89	80 column DR doc, part 2
FWDOC/EASM	D/V 80	37	Editor/Assembler loader doc
FWDOC/EDAV	D/V 80	47	80 column text editor doc
FWDOC/LOAD	D/V 80	49	LOAD doc, general description ofFWB
FWDOC/REPT	D/V 80	58	bug and update report
FWDOC/TIWR	D/V 80	32	TI Writer doc
FWDOC/UTIL	D/V 80	49	Describes FWB utilities
LDFW	D/F 80	11	Boots FW from EA
LH	PGM 3836	16	Line Hunter, a programmer's utility
LL	PGM 2064	10	need on disk to boot LOW LOADERfile
LOAD	PGM 7661	31	the main Funnelweb program,from XB
QD	PGM 2622	12	QUICK DIRECTORY, part 1
QF	PGM 2544	11	QUICK DIRECTORY, part 2
SCRIPT	D/V 80	4	sample SCRIPT LOAD file
SL	PGM 2130	10	need on disk to boot any SCRIPTLOAD
SYSCON	PGM 1214	6	use with CF/CG to store config data
UL	PGM 542	4	main USER LIST
XB4THLD	PGM 203	2	boots TI FORTH from XB user list

DONE

"GETTING THE MOST FROM YOUR CASSETTE SYSTEM"

The Lima User Group has purchased a copy of this 50 page book by Mickey Schmitt and Mike Wright. The book contains original material and selected newsletter articles. Our purchase of the book includes a copying agreement that allows us to make unlimited copies for members of the Lima UG only. For $2.50, including copying cost and postage, we will send a copy of this book to any paid member of the Lima Ohio UG. The original cost, if ordered from the authors, is $9.95 + $2.50 shipping.

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NEVER RELEASED OFFICIAL T.I. PERIPHERALS: THE MILTON BRADLEY MBX EXPANSION SYSTEM

described by Charles Good
Lima Ohio User Group

This device was (and maybe still is) literally years ahead of the competition when first introduced to the public at the January 1983 Consumer Electronics Show. When attached to the TI99/4A it allows speech recognition with specific Milton Bradley game and educational modules. The user speaks instructions into a microphone, and the 99/4A understands the spoken words and responds accordingly. With the MBX system, our old fashioned 99/4A's can do tricks that even the most sophisticated modern home game machines can't do. Voice recognition is NOT available even today for Nintendo and Sega game systems. These days you can find voice recognition hardware costing hundreds of dollars advertised in Computer Shopper for use with MSDOS and MAC computers. In T.I.'s last complete price list of 99/4A products published in June 1983, the MBX system lists for $129.95. It's too bad only only about 300 were ever made!

Although the title of this article might suggest that the MBX system was made by T.I., this is not so. The MBX was manufactured and sold by the Milton Bradley Company. T.I., under license from Milton Bradley, manufactured and sold the specific software modules designed for use with the MBX. The MBX system comes packaged in a box with the the same kind of "photograph of the product on a black background with white letters" style found on 99/4A console boxes. The actual MBX hardware is in the same gray plastic used for the most recent 99/4A consoles and official T.I. cassette program recorders. As a registered 99/4 owner, I received by mail in early November 1983 from T.I. (not from Milton Bradley) an advertisement describing the MBX and MBX specific software. Apparently Milton Bradley intended to have the MBX on store shelves for the 1983 Christmas season, but canceled all further production after BLACK FRIDAY. There is no serial number on my recently purchased used MBX, but it bears a sticker that says "MBX Control number 8310". This may mean that my unit was manufactured in the 10th week of 1983. My guess of 300 MBX units actually produced is based on the very limited availability of this product for sale at TI shows I have attended and in the possession of T.I. owners known to me, as well as the fact that UNISOURCE once advertised that they had 200 MBX's for sale.

There are three parts to the MBX "system", the control box, the joystick, and the headset/microphone. The heart of the system is of course the control box. It measures 10 x 7.5 x 2.5 inches and includes its own built in speech synthesizer. This box plugs into the joystick AND the cassette recorder ports of the 99/4A console. The MBX system is designed to be used with just the console and specific software cartridges. There is no provision in any of the MBX software modules for disk usage. Since one of the MBX connections occupies the cassette jack, you can't use a cassette recorder either. You must disconnect the regular speech synthesizer to use MBX. To hear speech, the two speech synthesizers cannot coexist.

The control box has a side port for the required AC power source. On the front of the control box are two 9 pin male D ports for joysticks, a jack for the headset/microphone, and an on/off switch. When you slide this switch to the ON position the MBX control box responds by saying "ready" in a well modulated female voice. This voice, and all speech generated by the MBX system, comes from a speaker at the top back of the control box, not from the monitor speaker. Music and other non-speech sounds continue to be heard from the monitor's speaker. Only spoken words (synthesized speech) are heard from the MBX system's speaker. You have to turn on the MBX before you turn on the console in order for the 99/4A to recognize the presence of the MBX. When activated, the MBX system disables the FCTN/0 QUIT console keypress. On the top of the control box is a 64 position membrane keypad. The top row of 8 keys on this keypad functions in the same way with all the MBX software modules that utilize this keypad. These top row keys include RESET, VOLUME UP (the volume of the speech coming from the MBX's built in speaker, not the music and sounds coming from the monitor speaker), VOLUME DOWN, MIC (toggles on and off the ability of the microphone headset to "hear" spoken words), YES, NO, PAUSE (stops game action), and GO. The action of other 56 positions on the control box keypad is specific to the particular software module in use. A very decorative keypad overlay comes with those software modules designed to utilize the rest of the MBX control box keypad. These overlays slip easily and snugly over the top of the keypad.

The headset superficially resembles a set of "walkman" earphones, but in fact contains no earphone speakers. The things that cover your ears are just pads. The microphone is positioned in front of your mouth and its position is adjustable. Physically the headset unit is flimsy. The wire leading to the microphone is thin and subject to stretching and damage at the point where it enters the adjustable microphone arm of the headset as the microphone arm is adjusted back and forth. Fortunately a handheld microphone designed to plug into a cassette recorder will also work with the MBX if the headset microphone breaks. The advantage of the headset over a handheld microphone is that the headset allows easy two handed manipulation of the special MBX joystick.

One joystick comes as standard equipment with each MBX system. A second joystick is listed in T.I.'s last 99/4A price list for $29.95 and can be plugged into the second joystick port on the control box. This would give each of two players their own separate joystick. In actual use of the MBX software modules a second joystick isn't really needed. Only one player at a time uses the joystick. The two joystick ports on the control box respond the same. There is no "joystick #1" and "joystick #2" as there is with

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the 99/4A console. The MBX joysticks are very fancy and cannot be used by themselves directly from the 99/4A's joystick port. Likewise, you can't use regular joysticks from the MBX console. Movement of the MBX joystick handle is very smooth. The device is described in promotional literature as a "triple-axis analog control that allows 360 degree object rotation and left to right and front to back proportional control of all movements." The word ANALOG suggests infinitely variable control. The MBX joystick's arm appears to produce the same kind of 8 direction movement typical of joysticks. The "analog" infinitely variable control is the rotating knob on the end of this joystick arm. With some MBX games this knob will rotate the object under control to face any direction, for example to orient a gun prior to shooting. In the MBX baseball game this knob controls the force of a batter's swing. Minimum swing power results in a bunt. A trigger style fire button is included with the MBX joystick, as well as three other buttons. These three buttons resemble mouse buttons and have specific purposes when using specific MBX software modules.

How does MBX allow the 99/4A to respond to voice commands? At the beginning of each session with an MBX software cartridge that allows voice recognition as an option, the user is asked if he wants to use voice recognition. This is always optional. All the MBX cartridges can be used WITHOUT voice recognition by using the keyboard and/or the MBX keypad for input instead. If voice recognition is chosen, the user is asked which commands are to be given in voice. It is possible to use voice for some commands and the console keyboard or MBX keypad for other commands, or to have all non joystick input by voice. The computer then directs the user to speak the possible commands (big, small, left, right, pencil, pen, centerfield, shortstop, etc) into the MBX microphone. This "voice training" of the MBX to recognize the user's voice patterns is repeated twice. Voice patterns are stored digitally on chips inside the MBX for the duration of the session, until the MBX is reset or shut off. This voice pattern storage is probably similar to that of some modern telephone answering machines. My home answering machine does not store the greeting message on cassette tape. Instead, my "This is the Good household answering machine..." message that greets incoming calls is stored on a chip and played to callers every time I don't answer the phone quickly enough. As with the MBX, I can quickly erase my "stored on a chip greeting" and replace it with another on my answering machine. An MBX user can use any word desired for a particular command, as long as the user is consistent in using this word. For example, in CHAMPIONSHIP BASEBALL a user can speak the imaginary name of a fielder when asking for a particular fielding position. During voice training the computer can ask the user to speak the word "shortstop" and the user can reply "Tony". As long as the user remembers that Tony is playing shortstop, the game will work OK.

After voice training the game begins and the computer responds to sounds it hears via the MBX microphone. Users have to be careful to ONLY speak when they want the computer to perform some action. Casual conversation by the user can result in unexpected things happening as the computer interprets some of this conversation as specific spoken commands. The solution to this problem is to turn off the MIC using the MBX keypad when response to voice commands is temporarily not desired. A small symbol continuously on screen indicates the ON/OFF status of the microphone.

How well does it work? How reliable is MBX's voice recognition? It is about 80-90% reliable. Sometimes the MBX either totally ignores a verbal command, or the command is incorrectly interpreted as a different verbal command. Part of the problem is that during the excitement of game play, a player's voice may sound different than it did during voice training. In CHAMPIONSHIP BASEBALL it can be very annoying to command a throw to "second" and instead see the ball thrown to "centerfield". All voice commands can instead be activated from the 99/4A keyboard of the MBX's keypad with almost 100% reliability. All the modules designed for use with the MBX, even those that absolutely REQUIRE the MBX, can be used totally without voice recognition. For really serious accurate game play, one should bypass the MBX's voice recognition feature. My testing panel is divided in their preference for voice recognition. Meaghan, my 5 year old daughter, likes to use voice recognition. I think she finds voice easier then reading the MBX overlay or memorizing complex 99/4A keypress sequences. Ian and Colin, ages 12 and 9, both prefer not to use voice recognition. High scores are important to these two serious game players, and such scores are easier to obtain with accurate game control.

What software is available? The following cartridges by Milton Bradley were specifically designed for use with the MBX expansion system. All these include speech synthesis and many also allow voice recognition. The speech synthesis of these software modules (but not speech recognition) can be accessed using the regular TI speech synthesizer without using the MBX system. They were officially released by T.I. in 1983 and 1984. The last (June 1983) 99/4A catalog published by TI lists these modules for $50 and $60. I have seen some of the "MBX system required" modules listed by TRITON in the past for as little as $3. Currently they are all available from L.L. Conner Enterprise for $15. Quoting from the booklet TEXAS INSTRUMENTS HOME COMPUTER PROGRAM LIBRARy that came packaged with many TI modules sold in late 1983:

"The BRIGHT BEGINNING SERIES includes four games which teach elementary programming, music, and other learning concepts. Ages 4-8."

MONEY HUNT
SOUNDTRACK TROLLEY
TERRY TURTLE'S ADVENTURE (MBX system required)
I'M HIDING (MBX system is required).

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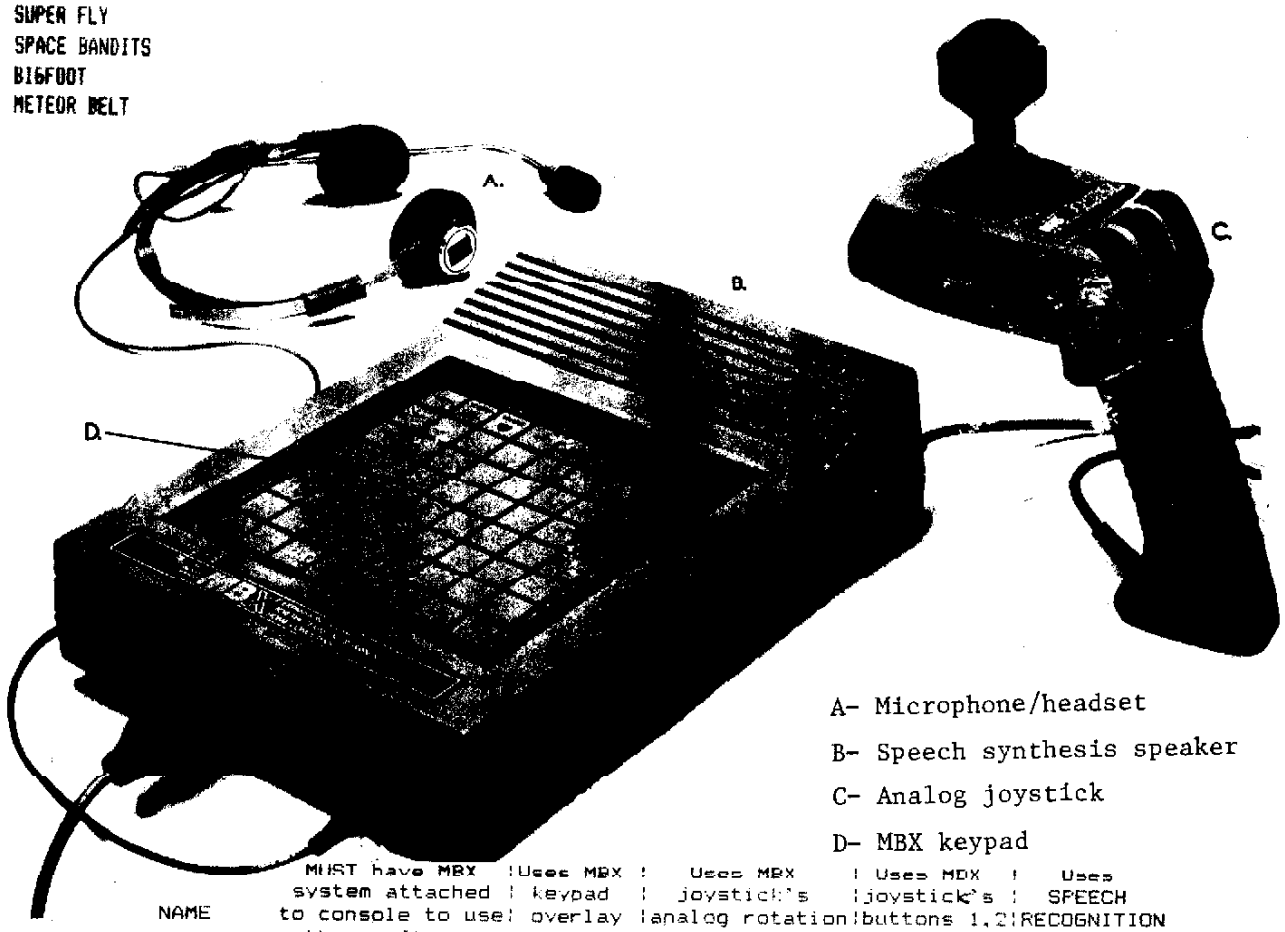
"The ARCADE PLUS SERIES has six arcade style games that take you from home town ball parks to meteor belts far, far away."

CHAMPIONSHIP BASEBALL (MBX system required)
SEWERMANIA
SUPER FLY
SPACE BANDITS
BIGFOOT
METEOR BELT

I have been told that Barry Boone has written some software that will allow programming the MBX and its non standard joystick. Such software would turn the MBX into something much more significant than a game enhancement. So far, this software has not been made available to others.



A- Microphone/headset

B- Speech synthesis speaker

C- Analog joystick

D- MBX keypad

NAME	MUST have MBX system attached to console to use this software	Uses MBX keypad overlay	Uses MBX joystick's analog rotation knob	Uses MBX joystick's buttons 1,2 and 3	Uses SPEECH RECOGNITION as an option
TERRY TURTLE'S ADVENTURE	Yes	Yes	No	No	Yes
I'M HIDING	Yes	Yes	No	No	Yes
CHAMPIONSHIP BASEBALL	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
BIGFOOT	No	No	No	Limited Use	No
SEWERMANIA	No	No	No	Yes	Yes
SUPERFLY	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
METEOR BELT	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
SPACE BANDITS	No	No	No	Yes	Yes
HONEY HUNT	No	Yes	No	No	No
SOUNDTRACK TROLLEY	No	Yes	No	No	No

NOTES: -Most software cartridges allow use of the MBX joystick as an option.
-METEOR BELT requires two MBX joysticks if the MBX system is used in a two player game.
-All software cartridges allow limited use of the MBX keypad for RESET, PAUSE, and GO.

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THE NEXT LIMA TI MULTI USER GROUP CONFERENCE
Saturday May 18,1991

We have booked space for the next TI Multi User Group Conference on the Lima Ohio Campus of The Ohio State University from 4PM Friday May 17 through 8PM Saturday May 18. This all TI/Geneve conference is FREE. There will be no admission charge and no charge for tables in the exhibit area. There is plenty of free parking, and all campus buildings are specifically designed to be easily accessible to those with physical handicaps.

As in previous years we will have setup Friday evening, and anyone who wants to show up and help or socialize is welcome. At this time (Friday evening) three copy stations will be available to any user group to copy anything they want from the Lima UG software library. User group disk copying will continue the following day (Saturday) along with all the main events.

Also, as in previous years, we will video tape all of the formal presentations and make copies of these videos available to any user group for the cost of postage and media. We just sent out in the mail today (Nov 10, 1990) the 70th set of videos made at the May 1990 MUG conference. Some of these video tapes went to individuals who are out of area members of the Lima UG, but most went to other user groups. It is safe to assume that several people will see each of these sets of video tapes. Thus, the potential audience of those giving formal presentations at a Lima TI MUG Conference is MUCH larger than just those attending the conference. If anyone has a product to demonstrate or something to teach the TI community, the Lima MUG conference is a good place to show off your stuff.

At the November 3 Chicago Faire, the following prominent individuals and vendors indicated they would probably attend the May 18 Lima TI MUG Conference:

-Barry Traver (Genial Traveler disk magazine)
-Competition Computer Products
-Chris Bobbitt (Asgard software)
-L.L. Conner Enterprise (Larry Conner)
-Bud Mills (Bud Mills services)
-Ramcharged Computers (Ron Markus)
-Harrison software (Bruce Harrison)
-MS Express Software (Mickey Schmitt)
-O.P.A. (Gary Bowser)

To schedule a formal presentation (remember the "large audience" such presentations have via our video tapes), to request free tables in the exhibit area, or to obtain additional information, phone Dave Szippl evenings at 419-228-7109 or write the Lima User Group at P.O. Box 647, Venedocia OH 45894.

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REPORT ON THE NOV 3, 1990 CHICAGO TI WORLD FAIRE
by Charles Good and Dave Szippl

Although we have attended several Chicago TI Fairs in the past, this is the first time we both did the "whole thing". Chicago now calls their event the "Chicago TI International World Faire," a very classy name for a very classy event. The "whole thing" included the Friday evening social mixer (admission $5; once inside hot and cold hors d'oeuvres were free but a 6 oz Pepsi cost $1.25), time later Friday in the Chicago UG's hospitality room (admission and Pepsi were both provided free by the Chicago UG), the Faire itself Saturday from 9AM - 6PM (the admission charge of $4 for non Chicago UG members got you a nice multi page printed catalog of the faire), an after faire organized cocktail hour by the pool (again $1.25 for a small Pepsi), the "after the faire catered banquet" ($15 admission for a reasonably good meal and some excellent socializing), and more time late Saturday night in the hospitality room (free admission and free Pepsi). I suspect the Chicago UG makes no profit from this event. The fees are necessary to pay what the Holiday Inn charges for the use of their space. We both really enjoyed ourselves, in many ways much more so than at the Lima MUG Conferences. At Lima we are both so occupied running the Conference that we don't really get a chance to socialize as much as we would like. At the Chicago Faire, with no responsibilities to worry about, we just have fun. It is really great to talk to TI personalities from coast to coast, Canada, and Europe.

The good news: at the after show banquet the Chicago UG stated that attendance was UP 12-16% from the previous year. No official attendance figure was provided.

We demonstrated the Funnelweb v4.31 40 column Disk Review at the Friday evening social mixer. This was up and running for several hours in one corner of the mixer room, and the people who played with it seemed impressed with its capabilities.

The no shows: It seems every year at Chicago some important and expected people or products don't make an appearance. MYARC had a table reserved but no representative. Geneves and MYARC HFDC cards were NOT available from dealers. There was no software available at the J.P. Software software, and J.P. Hoddie missed a scheduled formal presentation. Chris Pratt was there, but he didn't have any of his hard/floppy disk controllers. He was taking orders ($225 per card) and promised shipping would begin in a couple of weeks. I hope they arn't MYARC weeks.

Formal presentations were scheduled continuously from 8:45 AM through about 5:30PM. We were so interested in wandering around the exhibit area and talking to individual TI personalities that we both managed to miss most of the presentations. If we would have properly planned for this article we would have arranged, between the two of us, to attend all the presentations and make them part of this

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report. Maybe next time. Those presentations we did attend included the following:

--Gary Bowser (G.P.A.) had one of his TI IMAGE MAKER devices up and running. This is the "inside the console" 80 column device we have heard about. It includes 192K of video RAM and uses the 9958 video chip. You plug this little board into the console's video chip socket, solder one wire, and cut a hole in the back of the plastic console housing for the monitor cable. Gary said that all he was waiting for was the printing of the documentation, and promised shipping in one week. If that is true it should be in the mail as this article is being written. Cost: an amazing $179 plus $7.50 shipping US or Canadian.

--Chris Bobbitt (Asgard) showed YAPP, a MYART-like artist program by Alexander Hulpke for Geneves and 99/4As with 80 column devices. Chris says it is better than MYART, and you don't need a mouse. Joysticks or any of the various mice in the TI world will move the drawing pen about. Super high resolution formats are available with YAPP that are not available from any other TI or Geneve software. These include 512x424 pixels with 16 colors or 256x412 pixels with 256 colors. I (Charles Good) purchased this and found some major mistakes in the documentation (Chris' fault, not Alexander's). When I called Chris on the phone a few days later about this, Chris told me the defective parts of the docs will have to be reprinted.

--Ron Wolcott walked the audience through TIPS, which is now in v1.7, much faster than early versions. TI Print Shop is absolutely amazing, and it is free! Ron was an all expense paid guest of the Chicago User Group in appreciation for his contributions to the TI community.

--Barry Boone showed his GIF MANIA, sold by Texaments. This allows unmodified 99/4As to view GIF pictures and save them to TI Artist format. They can also be printed. There are lots of GIF format pictures out there, so this looks like a winner.

Several "generic" TI dealers were present selling almost everything for the TI and the CC40. Old modules, Axiom printers, and lots of expansion boxes were available.

RAVE had on display its expansion chassis. You can put BOTH the 99/4A motherboard and a Geneve in one of these and have them run simultaneously and share expansion cards (disk controller etc). They look great! But at well over $300 they may be hard to sell when used PE boxes are so easy to acquire.

Two of the exhibit room tables had "never released peripherals" on display. I say a 99/8, a 99/2, a HexBus interface, and a gray plastic speech synthesizer. L.L. Conner (a "generic" dealer) had a 99/2 for sale for $95. This was snapped up a few minutes after the start of the faire.

Some individuals with stuff to sell stood around with big cardboard signs on their chests and backs. One of us (Dave) purchased an 80 column AVPC card for $50. What a bargain! Now we both have AVPC equipped systems.

A little bit of history was made in one of the hotel rooms during the show. One of us (Charles) brought his Wafertape Drive and hooked it up to another Wafertape Drive brought by Gary Taylor of the Pittsburgh user group. This is probably the first time since 1983 that two Wafertape Drives have ever been connected together. We ran some tape duplication assembly language software found in the CC40 E/A manual (the E/A CC40 cartridge and manuals, as well as the Wafertape Drive are "never released" products) that REQUIRES two Wafertape Drives to function. You can't make this software work using the Mechatronics HexBus drive, you need Wafertape Drives. Getting two Wafertape Drives together is probably only possible at a big TI get together like the Chicago faire.

We look foreward to next year's Chicago Faire. However, next year we plan to bring our own Pepsi to the social events.

DONE

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Released or Not? A Review of "Shanghai"

By: Andy Frueh, Lima UG

With the recent coverage of "lost" TI items, I thought it would be a good time to review this "Concept Education Game." It was produced by Funware. I have seen about five of their products advertised. These include St. Nick, Ambulance, Pipes, Driving Demon, and Rabbit Trail. I have seen a few more that were never advertised, and I have never seen the advertised "Pipes." There are supposedly several more programs out there by Funware.

"Shanghai" starts out with the typical Funware title screen. The name of the program is in hugh blocky letters, and a graphic having to do with the game is in the middle. This is not impressive, but it is the actual game that counts. It teaches basic principals of having a business: making money and staying in business.

The action is somewhat slow, but is sufficient to keep people busy for a while without wanting to quit. The concepts involved are basic, but very young children may have difficulty. Be sure they know or you explain the idea of selling at higher cost than production costs to make a profit.

Pressing any key starts the game. This is the scenario: You are a merchant sailing down a river. You have to buy and sell items as quickly as you can, before your expenses exceed your revenue. An overhead view showing your ship and other ships, and the coastline is on the left of the screen. You have a total of three boats. You only loose one if you crash into one of the large ships that occasionally cruise by. You are faster than they are, and getting out of their way is easy. Crash three times and your game ends. Your game can also end as soon as your expenses are greater than the money your making (in other words, once your profit is $0).

On the right side of the screen is an information display. It shows your revenues and expenses. Profit is shown by subtracting the later from the revenues. Below this is your current cargo with a maximym of 5 items, and how many ships are left.

At the bottom of this display is the direction of the wind, which influences your control of the boat. Also is a box for the high score. In the middle of this side of the screen is a list of the six different commodities or items that can be bought and sold, along with current buy and sell prices. The whole idea is to buy things with a higher re-sell value.

Items are scattered on the coastline. To buy an item, move the ship so the nose is touching the item and press fire. If an item is blinking, then that marks a point where you can sell all of that particular item. For example, if the item looking like a duck was blinking, you can sell any "ducks" you have there, but no other items can be sold.

Buying and selling instantly affects your profit. Of course, you loose all your current cargo if you crash. That means if you spent 15 "dollars" buying an item and crash before you can sell these, you have lost that money. Occasionaly, there are black pirate boats that try to take all of your cargo. The same thing applies here as with crashing. These ships are very difficult to shake off.

If a prices suddenly is in a red box, that means that the price is going to change. It seems like they usually just drop, but they may also rise. This also keeps you on your toes.

I don't know how to get this game. I have seen it as a D/F 80 file, but I have never seen it advertised. It does a very good job of teaching its concepts, and is fun for an educational game. It is much more engrossing than "Ambulance" or "St. Nick" which many people say are worthless games. Funware has a real winner here, though.

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TWO BB&P INDEXES

Two of our members have, independently, each created an index of the topics covered in every issue of the Lima User Group's newsletter BB&P since the first BB&P published back in August 1985. The indexes created by Bob Zink and by Andy Frueh are both DV80 text files that read like "tables of contents" of each BB&P issue. Topics are not listed alphabetically, nor cross indexed. These indexes have been put in the Lima UG software library and can be obtained by members in the usual way by sending a disk. ANYONE, including non members, can obtain a copy of Andy Frueh's index, updated monthly, by sending Andy $2 for a disk copy or $4.50 for hardcopy. Andy's address is 638 Maplewood, Lima OH 45805. Hard copies of all BB&P back issues are available to Lima UG members only for $0.03 per page plus postage. Disk DV80 files of almost everything published in BB&P since October 1986 are available to any user group by sending us disks and a paid return mailer. There is no copy fee. The complete set requires 5 DSDD disks.

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